

To

CONVENT,

To promote

Universal Knowledge :

WITH A

GENERAL REPOSITORY
for Curious MANUSCRIPTS.

*The MEMBERS of it, that are Authors, or of a
good Genius, to have each 100 l. per Annum.*

A N D

*Any Native or Foreigner that brings in a Written Copy of
what is Extraordinary in Point of Learning, New Disco-
very, or Invention in any Kind, to receive, as it meets
with Acceptation in the World, a Reward of a Medal,
or Plate of Gold, from the Value of Ten to Five Hun-
dred Guineas.*

T H I S

*Publish'd by the Particular Direction of the Body of GENTLEMEN
that have engag'd to give, to carry on the WORK, the full Interest
of Forty Thousand, Eight Hundred Pounds.*

L O N D O N :

*Printed by M. JENNONS, against St. Sepulchre's Church Gate in Giltspur Street,
near West Smithfield. Where the Title is often Read.*

CONVENT

GENERAL REPORT

for Censors

MEMBERS OF THE

General Assembly

of the

Church of England

in the

Year 1711

Printed by

W. B. J. J. J.

London

Printed by

W. B. J. J. J.

ARTICLES

To Fix a

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To promote

Univerſal Knowledge :

WITH

A GENERAL REPOSITORY for

Curious MANUSCRIPTS, &c.

IN the *Post-man*, *August* the Twenty-fifth, there was inserted in the *Homes News* the following Article.

"We are assured, That by an Order of some Worthy Persons of Distinction and Authority, *SION-CHAPPEL*, at *Hampstead, Middlesex*, is appointed to be the Place of Residence for a settled Company of *Clergymen*, and other Gentlemen, that shall be in the Interest of the present Just Establishment.

"These Gentlemen, after they are fixt, are to be recommended to the King, for His Royal Protection and Favour: And until such Time as they shall be pre-

ferr'd to Places of Honour and Trust, in Church or State, or be otherwise provided for, according to their own Choice, they are to receive, by Monthly Payments, from the Bank of *England*, the Interest of Eight Thousand Pounds, to be laid out in Purchases for themselves and their Successors.

"When any Member of this Company, except a Clergyman, shall obtain a Place of Preferment, by means of the Interest of this House, he is to pay out of the Profits of it a certain Sum Yearly, so long as he shall enjoy the Post; which Money is also to be applied to the Use of the rest of the Members of the said

" Company, that shall yet remain unprovided for, with all other Advantages that shall hereafter occur

" The Payment of the Interest of the Eight Thousand Pounds, and a Share out of all the Places that shall fall to the Members of the said Company, to be paid and continued for Ever; Statutes being to be made and settled for that Purpose, in the same Nature as it is in the Universities.

" These Endowments are but small, to what are promised to be added to the House by other Persons of Honour.

" Such Clergymen, and other Gentlemen, as are firm to the Establish'd Church and settled Constitution, may send in their Names in order to be enter'd Members of this Company. The Apartments will be assign'd according to the Degree and Quality of the Persons.

This is every Word *verbatim* of what was inserted of the whole Affair in the *Post-man*, or any other printed Paper, or of what was read publicly in any Church or Chappel.

No more than Twenty four in Number are ever to be receiv'd upon that Foundation; and each of them is to have settled upon him, till prefer'd, Fifty Pounds *per Annum*, and to pay for the Rent of his Apartment and Noon-Commons Fourteen Shillings a Week; as must also those hereafter mention'd, that are to receive a Hundred Pounds *per Annum*.

If at any time there shall want of the full Number appointed to be fix'd of the latter Members; the Money to be divided upon any Account to those Persons so wanted, or that neglect to pay, is to go to discharge part of the Rent of the House for their Vacancy, and to pay for their Commons, and for defraying other incident Expences.

The late Rebellion hinder'd the Publication of this Treatise for some considerable Time; which gave the Enemies to so Noble a Work, an Opportunity to imagine, that they had gain'd an entire Con-

quest, and suppress it by their Reproaches and Columnies. For upon Notice given of the first Foundation, that was no more than an Advertisement of what was intended, many Persons, with a kind of a perfidious Laugh, were pleas'd to say, That they knew there was no Money at all given for carrying on any such Thing; and that it was only Mr. Peery's Contrivance to give it such a Reputable Title, under Colour to erect an Academy, in opposition to the Universities, for bringing up Dissenting Preachers.

Certainly, these cunning *Abisbopbels* must value themselves upon making this sort of keen Satire, that stabs at once, privately, a Man's Reputation to the quick.

Their Words are so turn'd, and full of Assurance, that they gain a lasting Credit in the Thoughts of all that hear them. And so there is no further Inquiry made into the Truth of Matters.

Now to detect these Forgers of Lies, that they may be noted, the Question is ask'd any reasonable Man, What End could the most vile Creature upon Earth have in publishing to the World, that the Interest of Eight Thousand Pounds was to be paid, when only Four Weeks and odd Days wou'd discover the whole Cheat, and those that promised the Money must have run for it, or be stand'd by the Persons so impos'd upon, and decoy'd into the House?

For, according to the Condition of the principal Article, Thirty-one Guineas are to be paid once in every Month, throughout the Year, and to be wholly apply'd to the Use of the Gentlemen put in by the Donors.

There might have been some Pretence to have rais'd this horrid Reflection, if all or any of the Gentlemen, had been oblig'd to pay any great Sums of Money at their Entrance, or at any other Time; whereas nothing at all was ever demanded, or is to be: Nor is Mr. Peery so much as to provide the Provisions for them, or any other; he having utterly refus'd that Offer, upon Account of any Profit, or Advantage, whatever.

His Allowance is only to be a fixt Sum for all the Gentlemen to make up, in the Whole, the full Rent of the House : And tho' it is considerable, why should any envy him, since it is the Donors Pleasure, and all those Persons that are to pay it, will receive much more from the Settlement than that and all their other Expences.

As to the Pretence of the Design, to set up an Academy in Opposition to the University, it is of the same Stamp and Dye with the Juggle palm'd upon the Faith of the ignorant Multitude, of the Church falling in the Reign of the present Protestant and Lawful Successor, and of its being to be preserv'd from that fatal Ruin by bringing in the Pretender, who is a profess'd *Roman Catholick*.

What ! Twenty-four Divines and other Gentlemen educated at *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, to be pick'd out from all others, as the fittest Persons to bring up Youth for Dissenting Preachers ? An odd Tale for Zealots in any Cause to tell abroad for Fact, and to speak it with the Rage of Furies ; as if they at that Moment saw the Fellows of the Colleges of both Universities turn'd out, and the Dissenters Sons brought up at *Sion-Chappel*, going in to take Possession of their Quarters.

It will be diverting enough, to hear the new Notions and Censures that will be now coin'd by the Ill-natur'd upon what is further propos'd to be done. For the first Eight Thousand Pounds was only a small Beginning, to what has been since compleated by far greater Donations.

Here they must assume an Air of Stoick Gravity, and talk with the Grace of Philosophers ; or else their pale Envy and jealousy will be seen thro' their thin Veils and Disguises, made use of to destroy a Work that may be look'd upon in twelve Months by the Eye of *Europe*, as her brightest Ornament.

One Thing cannot be omitted : Some busie Inquirers have ask'd the Names of

the Gentlemen that Found this Settlement. It is reply'd, that the Donors will, when they think fit, declare themselves : But however, in particular, these Querists may depend upon it to be told, as soon as any one Payment promis'd to be made, is not perform'd at the Time or Times appointed, as the Money becomes due to any Person or Persons whose Right it is to receive it. Till then, what Business has any Body to ask that impertinent Question ?

It is suppos'd, that the Enemies to the Constitution, and to what is great and solid, want to know the Founders, in Expectation to make them the Mark of their Observation and Discourse.

To come then to the Matter of most Importance : The Money already obtained, is the full Sum of One Hundred and Seventy Pounds, to be paid once every Month at *Sion Chappel*, which is in all Two Thousand and Forty Pounds *per Annum*. For besides the Hundred Pounds *per Month*, which is to be paid to the Twenty-four Gentlemen upon the first Foundation, there is Seventy Pounds *per Month* more, to be apply'd as is hereafter specify'd.

Which last Sum of Seventy Pounds *per Month*, was ask'd for, and is given to encourage Learned and Ingenious Men, to study and compose Pieces upon all necessary and curious Subjects, to be printed in large and small Volumes, some Weekly, others Monthly or Quarterly.

To this End a Scheme was drawn up and laid before the Founders, who did so far approve of it, as to desire that the same shou'd be immediately printed and enter'd upon, and that they wou'd answer as to the Funds therein requir'd ; and whatever else is to be perform'd on their Part, they have engag'd to make good and maintain.

*The Copy of the Scheme is as follows,
(the Preface is left out.)*

ARTICLES

TO

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To promote Universal KNOWLEDGE, with a General *Repository* for Curious *Manuscripts*. The Members of it that are Authors, or of a good Genius, to have each a Hundred Pounds *per Annum*: And any Native or Foreigner, that brings in a Written Copy of what is extraordinary in point of Learning, New Discovery, or Invention in any Kind, to receive, as it meets with Acceptation in the World, a Reward of a Medal, or Plate of Gold, from the Value of Ten to Five Hundred Guineas.

The INTRODUCTION.

AS long as Learning and curious Arts are in being, the Memory of the late *French Monarch Lewis XIV.* will stand glorious and rever'd. No Prince in *Europe* ever exceeded him in this one Particular. He lov'd and rewarded Men of singular Abilities and Genius.

When any thing came forth beyond an ordinary Capacity, the Author did not only receive his Royal Favour and Protection, but was paid to the full Merit of the Work.

This Wisdom and Generosity animated others to study to find out something still further in the Improvement of Knowledge and Arts, and by that many attain'd to it.

In these Glorious Examples, that Monarch has left to his Subjects many singular Benefits.

It may be seen in the Advancement *France* has made of late Years in Learning, in Politicks beyond other Nations, in the Stratagems of War, in the Management of Trade, and other useful Inventions; besides those that tend to Pleasure and Delight, which are numerous and surprising.

This beautiful Scene taken from a neighbouring Nation, casts Blackness upon *England*. To her Dishonour it is spoke, the whole World cannot produce such an Island, nor Kingdom, such Inhabitants, as she, for general Detraction. The Characters

acters of our greatest Men have been blasted by it. Treatises might be writ upon that Head.

At the Birth of any new Invention, let it be never so perfect, or point at the wisest End, the Author of it is commonly laugh'd at by Youths and Fools. Those of Gravity and clear Judgment, that see the Beauty of the Thought, if it suits not with their Way and Interest, they'll be sure to discountenance, and pick out Faults or Errors in the Draught, tho' they cannot by all their Cunning mend, or correct in the whole, one Line; which discovers in them a Meanness of Spirit below the Dignity of wise Men.

These are Stains in the Garments of the Britons, that can't be hid till they come to be divested of that one thing call'd Envy, or Fear of being rival'd.

In other Nations, and amongst the Infidels, the brightest Stars are to be seen seated in the upper Hemisphere of Power: But in the Latitude of our Island, those of lesser Magnitude are often advanc'd to the highest Orbs.

Not Merit, it is Interest or Bribes chiefly prefer to Stations of Authority. Look back to the last Reign: Then there was as strange a Disorder, as it would be surprising to behold a Man paint out the Prospect of the Moon seated above the Sun, or to see (were it possible) such a Change in the Creation it self.

The Reflection is parallel to the Case; the same Confusion appear'd in the Sphere of Human Affairs and Actions; all manner of Government was disfram'd and unthring'd.

For Men of fine Parts, and Patrons to their Country, were mock'd at and rejected; and those of inferior Knowledge, and Bigots to the Romans, were mounted to the chief Places in the Church, in the Privy Council, in the Parliament House, upon the Seat of Judicature, and in the Petty Courts and other Offices, where Wisdom, Virtue and Truth ought to have been set, to guide Mens Ways and Actions right.

But to withdraw so deform'd a Sight, a Prospect is here presented of its Reverse; and that is, to encourage Learned and Ingenious Men, both of our own and of other Nations, beyond what the French King, or any other ever attempted or aim'd at, and also to establish this and much more in one House, upon one Foundation, and by one select Body of Men.

To compleat this in all its Parts, and answer the Ends, the main Heads requir'd to be consider'd and put into Practice are here rang'd into Articles, that the whole Plan may be made more conspicuous.

ARTICLE I.

MR. Collier's Expressions relating to the Play-Houses, may be varied to the present Occasion. The Constitution of Mens Minds are as much infected and poyson'd, as ever the Theatres were.

Some of our modern Authors have indeed in a great measure the Spring of Thought in their Power. Learning, Wit and Eloquence are moving Entertainments, which, if rightly improv'd, would be very significant; and the Use of them chiefly lies in the Application. These Advantages are now for the most part in the Enemies Hand, and under a dangerous Management; like Daggers seiz'd and pointed the wrong Way.

It is visible that Doctrines of Atheism, Blasphemy, Heresy, Profaneness, Treason, Faction, Rebellion, with other false Principles, are now carry'd by the Force of many Writers to such a full Head, that there seems to be but one Way left to re-establish Truth and Peace upon their lasting Basis; and that is this now to be introduc'd. It cannot be thought, but that Men of Zeal and Loyalty will concur and assist in the Work.

A R T. II.

Witnesses need not be call'd, to prove how or when the Age was corrupted, and what Occasions may have been given to
Thoughts

Thoughts of entering upon a Task of the greatest Difficulty ; because Things may appear to the Sense to cross the Ascendant of One Seminary, and the Aspect of some Men of Figure and Fortune.

Yet it is thought, as the Intention is laid, that neither Strength nor Policy will be able to suppress it. Time calls to make a Stand, to oppose the violent Insults that are made against the Throne of the Deity it self, as well as the visible Authority given from thence to our lawful Monarch, and the Rulers under him. The Way to enter upon it is contain'd in the next Article.

A R T. III.

There are in Great Britain many Persons of Leisure and of good Character, in the Interest of the present Establishment, who are Men of Universal Learning, and of extraordinary Natural Parts. Others there are, tho' no great Scholars, of very fine Thoughts and uncommon Notions, or that are skill'd in some one Art or Science beyond others.

Now it is propos'd, that a select Number of Persons, thus qualify'd, be fix'd in one House, and they to be call'd by the Name of *The CONVENT for promoting Universal Knowledge.*

A R T. IV.

These Gentlemen, as soon as they are settled into a *Convent*, to consult together the most proper Means to begin the Work intended, and what Subjects to write upon first, and how to proceed upon all the most necessary and curious Heads, or Doctrines, requir'd from such a great Body, and to print those Copies by the Order, and in the Name of the whole *Convent*.

Next to Rulers and Lawgivers, such a Constitution will be as necessary in the Nation. For where the Authority of the other Power cannot extend, the *Convent's* Writings may, and very effectually.

The want of it gives Liberty to Hostilities that fall short of the reach of Law. The Government, publick Communities, nor private Families, or Persons, can in many Respects be protected from the open Violence offered to them by the Multitude, and prodigious Numbers of ill Tongues, or seditious Papers or Libels.

Upon fixing this Foundation, the Nation in general will be vindicated, where otherwise it cannot ; and those that move in lower Stations may come and make an Appeal concerning the Right of a Cause, and the *Convent* can, by presenting the true State of the Case, patronize the Innocent and Injur'd against the most angry and powerful Enemy, or Oppressor.

A R T. V.

The Contents of this Article may be laid down to Men of Experience, as a standing Maxim, That Books tend to the extinguishing, or Growth of Virtue. Authors are like to Generals of Armies ; their Conduct saves or destroys a Kingdom, or State. The Fate of a Church, or Nation, is many times determin'd according to the Movement of the Pen. It has made *Britain's* Sceptre often shake in the Hands of her Monarchs. Now she feels the Effect of those late Volumes and Treatises of *Hereditary Right* ; *Jure divino* ; *Not to resist Princes upon pain of Damnation*, the *Papists*, *Tyrants or Infidels* ; of the *Church in Danger* ; the *Church independant of the Crown* ; *English Advice to the Freeholders of England*, with abundance more such pernicious Pieces.

Unless then there is a Body of Learned and Judicious Men call'd together to stem these Tides, it is to be dreaded, Profaneness and Rebellion will run on in the same Channel, and one time or other Ruin and Slavery will come in as a Torrent.

The View of this Danger is naked to the Eye that is not blinded with the Spirit of Enthusiasm, or the Zeal of Idolatry.

A R T.

A R T. VI.

One principal Point for the Members of the *Convenc* to go upon, may be to make a deep Inquiry into the Fundamentals of Religion and Politicks, and to concert the whole Body of Divinity, as it ought to be compil'd and finish'd. One or two Authors, tho' never so well read or experienc'd, can't bring these Works, and many other now to be mention'd, to Perfection. A great Body are requir'd to examin into Articles of such Extent and Weight.

A R T. VII.

Many Questions want to be answer'd, and Controversies determin'd, that are now in Dispute among the Learned, relating to the Principles of Faith, and to some of the fixed and moving Bodies of the Creation, and other yet unreveal'd Secrets; and to improve upon what has already been advanc'd by the Ingenious.

A R T. VIII.

It will be of Use to the World to set at Pieces that give a true Judgment of Books; whether the Contents of them are, or are not of Service, and wherein perfect or defective.

A R T. IX.

It would be a Task of high Importance, to make a thorough Search, and give an account in particular of the wrong Notions and Errors that now reign in most Publick and Private Bodies; by which many of the Subjects and Youth are led away, and two Parts out of three in the Nation poyson'd and given up to Mistakes in Matters of the last Consequence, both Sacred and Civil.

A R T. X.

Tho' these close Scrutinies are hinted at, it is not intended to widen, or make

Breaches in point of Religion or Party; but to cement and heal.

Nor is it meant, that the Members of the *Convenc* can in every thing be all of one Opinion or Sentiment. Controversies or Disputes in little Matters are not to be entirely remov'd, or extinguish'd from the Face of the Earth. Whilst Men are mortal, there will always be some Difference in the Minds, as well as in the Complexions or Faces of Persons; and to think of making a thorough Change there, would be as wrong a Notion, as to go about to alter the very Course of Nature itself.

Neither is the *Convenc* intended to increase the Number of Books, but diminish them; by taking out of the Way those that are unnecessary, by retracting large Volumes into small Pieces, and reducing the scatter'd Body of Learning into his Compass.

A R T. XI.

As there may be many Divines and other Gentlemen of extraordinary Parts, that may desire to be Members of this *Convenc*, but their Affairs cannot permit them to reside in the House, or otherwise they may not care to be known to the Publick to be Authors: In this Case it is propos'd, that such have Liberty to put in the *Convenc* any Relation or Friend to represent them, and they themselves to write the Copies and receive the Income arising from the House.

A R T. XII.

The Persons that are plac'd in the room of the Our Members, will be improv'd by the Conversation in the *Convenc*, and hearing the Reasonings or Disputes among the Learned in Variety of Subjects and Cases. They which are enter'd young, by these Opportunities may in Time come to be the brightest Authors in the House.

A R T. XIII.

When this *Convent* is fix'd, it is propos'd two of the most Judicious of the Members be sent to *France, Holland, Italy, Germany*, and other Countries, to buy up One Copy of every new Book of Value that is printed in any Language, and to make Purchases of all curious Manuscripts that can be obtain'd, and to send them over to be translated and printed in *English*, either Whole, or in Abstracts, as they may deserve.

A R T. XIV.

These travelling Members to get acquainted and converse with the most ingenious Men where-ever they come, and to inquire into all the Curiosities, that are proper to be known or seen; and what immediately then passes, or occurs in Affairs that may be entertaining to such as search into the Secrets of Art, State, or Nature.

The Gain that will redound to the Members of the *Convent* from this one Branch in such Copies and Manuscripts, cannot but be very considerable. For if the Pieces and Journals of these travelling Members are printed singly, they will be some of the best and most acceptable Treasures extant, and chiefly sought after; and the Journals in particular, as being Narratives to be depended upon for Truth, and to contradict false Accounts that have been before affirm'd in other Prints for Matter of Fact.

A R T. XV.

It is propos'd that the Members of the *Convent* print their Works at any time, as they shall think fit: But as there may be something of Moment fall out every Day, requir'd to be answer'd or spoke to immediately; it is thought proper that they publish one small Piece once a Week, or oftner, and the Collections of them all in one Volume once a Quarter, or otherwise.

A R T. XVI.

The Members of the *Convent* to chuse among themselves two or three, to inspect and look over all the Copies and Manuscripts that shall be writ by any of the Members, or sent in by Strangers; and what Pieces they do not approve of, shall not to be printed.

A R T. XVII.

It is propos'd, that no Member of the *Convent* shall be oblig'd in any one Month to write, compose, or obtain of the curious any more Manuscripts, than what will fill, in a fair Character in Print, half a Sheet of Demy Paper. The Reason why no more Copy is desir'd of any one Member, is this, That all the Works may be compleat and correct.

A R T. XVIII.

Every Member of the *Convent* to be always left to his Liberty to chuse what Subject he shall think fit, to treat upon, and what shall best suit with his particular Gifts and Endowment.

A R T. XIX.

No Question ever to be ask'd any Member of the *Convent*, whether the written Copies he gives in are of his own composing, or done by other Hands; but on the contrary, all the Gentlemen of the House or Abroad, to be desir'd to use what Assistance they can from each other, or from Acquaintance.

A R T. XX.

To distinguish the Copies that are printed and published by the *Convent*, it is propos'd, that all Pieces sent in by Strangers have affix'd to them, at the Bottom of the first Page, a particular Mark whereby the Reader may know them to be such, and

is'd by the Author or Proprietor of those Copies, the Names to be added.

The Manuscripts of the Members of the *Convent* to have at the Top of each Piece, either the two first Letters of the Author's Name, or some private Cypher or Figure.

This is thought necessary to be done, to the end that the Ingenious may make Comparison of the Degrees of Worth in the changeable Performances of the Authors, and judge who is the most solid Divine, the greatest Philosopher, the skillful Mathematician, the best Historian, the ablest Linguist, the most eloquent Orationator, and the finest Poet, &c.

A R T. XXI.

Curiosity and Politeness is advanc'd to such Perfection, that scarce any thing can gain Attention which runs in the beaten Path: There wants new Inventions and Schemes to charm Men into the Love of what is excellent.

The Eye is for prying into Objects that are more beautiful than any before presented: Those only can stay the Thoughts from immediately wandering further.

Such Scenes win on the Audience and keep them waking, that change often, and bring in what was never brought upon the Stage, or appears in some alter'd Habit or Colour.

There may be these and other Turns given to please, without Excess of Gayety; and at certain times serious Discourses may be taken as noble Lessons, if they are express'd with Divine Eloquence, and brought in with a Solemnity suitable to their Weight and Dignity.

Great Minds are never weary in looking over Pages that set forth in all its Parts the Fears and Agonies of Death, or that measure out Eternity to the longest Reach of Man's Thought.

To speak of invisible Spirits that are undress'd from the Body, fills the Soul with unexpressible Conceptions, and gives a Prospect into the unknown World,

and a Thought of its own Flight from Mortality.

A R T. XXII.

To mention in particular what Collections will most please the Humour of the World, cannot be done.

If any may be mention'd, they are Copies taken from the Works of the Creation.

Natural Philosophy has indeed been largely and well treated upon, in the Method practis'd by the Ancients, who had no Regard to entertain in their Compositions further than to tell the Use, Cause, or Nature of what they spoke of. The Chapters are long and the Style heavy, which tires out most Readers before they come to the End of the Subject, or the Sense of the Matter.

To present in another Way, and in short and diverting Epistles, what is of highest Perfection within both Hemispheres, and contain'd on, and in the Earth and Sea. No Pieces could exceed those Plans, if writ by Men of quick and fine Notions. For there is so much Beauty in some fix'd Objects, and in the Forms, Shape and Actions of many irrational Animals, that would of themselves add abundance of Life and Spirit to the Schemes.

The Laws, Arts and Sciences laid down and taught by several of those Beings, only from Natural Instinct, may be made good Prefaces, as well as the various Scenes of Gayety and Cruelty they pass thro'; together with their Labours and Pleasures, and the Antidotes they have against Poyson and Diseases.

The most trifling Root, Plant, Weed, Stone, or Pebble, affords Subject of Discourse, either of its Growth, Mark, finer or coarser Soil; the Shape, or something else that is particular; of its Change, or Danger in being destroy'd, or defac'd out of Time.

The Way to bring Divinity and Morality into General Imitation, is to prove

the Deity and Trinity, by painting out in the strongest Colours the Works of Nature in small Pieces.

Those Images and Figures the most Learned *Rabbies* and proudest *Virtuoso's* would condescend to look upon, to see the Niceness and Sense they describe, borrow'd from the Copies and Collections out of the first Original Manuscripts, with vast Thoughts, wide Conceptions, and deep Penetration of the Authors.

As many Genius's are requir'd to make all the Lines just in these Compositions, as there are Artists to compleat a well-contriv'd Watch, or Engine; one must frame the Ideas, another gather them into a Body, and a third marshal and add the Ornament for Sight.

A R T. XXIII.

One of the grand Points aim'd at in these Articles, is to remove the Impediments that hinder the Growth of what is truly delightful and desirable; and to shew that there wants at this Day as great a Reformation and Change to be wrought in the Land in many Particulars, as there was enter'd upon in the Reign of King *Harry VIII.*

A R T. XXIV.

The Profits of the Works writ by the Members of the *Convent* upon all various Subjects, may, as to Appearance, swell to a bigger Sum than what is fit here to be mention'd. Let Reason Judge.

To deny it, and for any to plead the Pieces will not be well done, is contrary to Sense; and if they are, it is certain they will sell, and most Persons of Worth will have in their Libraries or Studies, the Copies and Collections of the *Convent*.

It will be also in vain for the most violent Opposers to this noble Design to say, that the World will soon be weary of reading the Books of these Authors; unless they can first prove, that single and obscure Persons treat upon all difficult Points with better judgment and deeper

Arguments, than such a select Body consulting together can be suppos'd to do.

A R T. XXV.

However, to silence all Objection, and put Things out of Dispute: As to the Sale of the Writings of the Members of the *Convent*, a Way is found out to make their Works force a Passage thro' all Difficulties, and to invest the said Members of the *Convent* with the Right of Property in the Copies that shall be compos'd by the most approv'd Authors, and Men of the finest Invention, in many Parts of the World. And these Copies, printed among the Writings of the Members of the *Convent*, cannot fail to bring in always very great Sums of Money; for many of these will be standing Pieces, and bear Reprinting often, as the *Whole Duty of Man*, and several other Books.

By this Method it is thought, that such perfect Collections in all Arts and Sciences may be made, as no University or Society of the Learned ever obtain'd, or knew how to purchase.

The private Interest of the Members of the *Convent* is not the only thing intended. The Point goes much further. It is to get together, from all Parts, the dispers'd Works of the Curious to be compil'd into select Volumes, that the Readers in this, and in other Nations, may know where to find, in few Pieces, the general Opinion of the Learned and Ingenious upon all curious and valuable Subjects, without being oblig'd to buy many Books, or to search over Heaps of scatter'd Treatises.

To effect this so desirable an End, pursue the following Articles.

A R T. XXVI.

That the *Convent* may be made a Principal Repository for the best Manuscripts, it is propos'd there shall be a Settlement appointed by the Laws and the Statutes of the House, That any Member of it, or any Native or Foreigner, who shall at any time,

time; and as often as he shall write, or obtain and bring into the *Convent* a Written Copy of what is Curious, in Point of Learning, New Discovery, or Invention in any Kind, shall receive, as it meets with Acception in the World, a Reward of a Medal, or Plate of Gold, from the value of Ten to Five Hundred Guineas, or upwards.

A R T. XXVII.

The Money to pay at all times for the Manuscripts, as fast as the several Sums shall be justly demanded for them. It is propos'd to raise that Cash thus.

When any Copy, or Copies, sent into the House, that are printed by Order of the *Convent* singly, or with other Works, and are so approv'd of, as but to sell, to bring in, after all necessary Charges are clear'd, Thirty Guineas Profit; then the Author, or Authors, or Proprietors of the said Copy, or Copies, are to receive a full Third part thereof, *viz.* Ten Guineas; and so on in Proportion to the Sum of Five Hundred Guineas, or upwards, according as the Copy, or Copies, shall sell. And all such Shares of Money to be paid in Medals, or Plates of Gold, to the Value as shall become due to the Author, Authors, or the Proprietors: The Workmanship of the Medal, or Plate, to be included in the Value.

Each of these Prizes to have stamp'd, or engraven, the Author's or Proprietor's Name, if permitted, with the Title of the Copy and the Year when it was printed.

A R T. XXVIII.

These Rewards to be given and paid as soon as the Money comes into the *Convent* from the Booksellers, Publishers, or Printers, and the Accounts can be made up with them.

A R T. XXIX.

Where several Copies are printed together, the money to be equally divided

among the Authors, with a Regard to the Worth of their Works. The Donors of the Settlement, or others appointed by their Order, always to determinate the Matter; and whatever they shall allot and appoint to each Person, in these Cases, that to stand good, and be unalterable.

The Author, or the Proprietor of any Copy, may know near what will come to his Share, by making Observation how the Publick esteems the Work, and as he shall see the Pieces sell Abroad.

A R T. XXX.

This publick Recompense given to Strangers for Manuscripts, is what was never offered to the World, to get into one House the Writings of the most sagacious Inquirers into Nature and the Cause of Things in nice and difficult Points, and for the closest Search into hidden Secrets, that are proper to be known and found out for the further Service of Man.

A R T. XXXI.

The Difficulties most Ingenious Authors labour under, deserve particular Notice. They are often depriv'd of the just Recompense of their Study and Pains, as well as the World is of the Sight and Benefit of their Writings or Inventions. The Case wants no strict Inquiry to make it appear.

Many Copies would sell, if publish'd amongst the Works of the Curious, and when the publick knew that they were first examin'd into by Men of deep Penetration.

But had the Thoughts of these very Authors, tho' never so good in themselves, come forth privately in single Pieces, or with no Character, not one Copy in ten would have been regarded, or paid the Expences of Paper and Printing.

It is the Opinion Men have of Authors that promotes or hinders their Books going off, and being read: Abundance of Excellent Pieces are suppress'd, for want

of a noted Name in the Title Page, or a Preface writ to recommend them by some of the Learned in Vogue.

Here these Grievances of Authors are intirely remov'd. For the Note the *Convent* will have in most Nations, and the Copies being to be printed by Order, and in the Name of the whole Body of the Members, will give a Credit and General Publication to the Works of all Strangers, who shall send in Copies of Value to the *Convent* to be publish'd.

A R T. XXXII.

As the main Spring of the whole Work depends upon choosing Men to be Members of the *Convent*, that are approv'd Authors, or that know how to judge what Manuscripts are good and ought to be receiv'd; it is propos'd to engage such to come in and enter, that each Person, after he is accepted of as a Member of the *Convent*, shall be intitul'd to receive and take his proportionable Share of all the Monies that shall be subscrib'd to for any Copy or Copies, printed and publish'd by Order and in the Name of the whole Body, and of all the Profits that shall otherwise arise from the Sale of the said Works. And in Case all that will not bring in to each Member of the *Convent*, after the Rate of the full Sum of a Hundred Pounds *per Annum*, then Seventy Pounds *per Month* to be immediately added and paid, as a free Gift, by the Donors, or their Order, after Paper and Printing is paid for, to make up to all those Members of the *Convent*, who are the best Authors, or the most experienc'd in Copies, that full Sum: And the said Seventy Pounds *per Month*, or so much of it as shall at any time be wanted to perform this Covenant, to be continued to be paid as aforesaid, as long as there shall be occasion for it, and till every Member in the House comes to receive a Hundred Pound a Year certain: And the Members of the *Convent* always to demand it as their just Right and Property.

By which Gift of Seventy Pounds *per Month*, each Member of the *Convent* who is approv'd of, will never receive less than the Sum mention'd, tho' the Copies sell not at all, or very little, which is the worst that an Enemy can suppose or say.

A R T. XXXIII.

The Twenty four Gentlemen who are no Authors, who are to have settled upon each of them Fifty Pounds *per Annum*, as was at first spok'd of, they to be enter'd last; that if it be found, more Money is absolutely wanted to carry on the Affairs of the *Convent* relating to the Members that are Authors, then the Hundred Pound *per Month* that is to be paid to the Twenty-four Gentlemen, to be added to the Seventy Pound, and the whole One Hundred and Seventy Pound *per Month* to be applied to that Use only, or so much of it as shall be thought by the Donors to be requir'd.

A R T. XXXIV.

Upon the Entrance of the Twenty-four Gentlemen that come in upon the first Foundation, who are not Authors, but are admitted purely on account of their Zeal and good Service to the Government, they to have no Right or Property in the printed Copies, and to be independent of those who are Authors in the *Convent*.

The End of the Articles

THIS is the true Copy of the Scheme that was laid before the Founders of the Settlement, and which is approved of by them. The Payment of all the Sum of Money within requir'd, and whatever else is to be perform'd on their Part. they have engag'd to make good and maintain in every Particular.

Now that the Publick may not be disappointed of the true Value of the Works printed

printed by the *Convent*, settled upon the Foot of the Articles above recited; it is desir'd of the Learned and Judicious, to recommend to the Donors by Letters, such Divines and other Gentlemen as they know to be qualified to be enter'd Members of the *Convent*.

Each Person so recommended and approv'd of by the Donors, is to have a Hundred Pounds *per Annum*, and the further Advantage that may arise from the Sale of the Copies in general; as also the full third Part of the Profits that shall at any time be made of his own Pieces, or of any Manuscripts he shall obtain from others.

The written Copies sent into *Sion-Chapel* at *Hampstead, Middlesex*, to be printed by the *Convent*, must have Postage or Carriage paid, or they will not be receiv'd.

These great and particular Encouragements are given, that the Subjects of every Nation, who have any Beauty of Invention, may be incited to study and find out what is of most Service and Use to the World, as well as for Delight and Entertainment; and that the House may always answer the Title of it, *A CONVENT to promote Universal Knowledge; with a General Repository for Curious Manuscripts.*

From this Foundation may be often presented to the Eye of the Publick, what is extraordinary and uncommon throughout the whole Subject of Nature, and of the principal Actions and Virtues of Men, with their Reverse; and that sometimes in Original Pieces, like the *Persian Laws*, unalterable, not to be struck out by the Length of Time, the Force of Jealousy, or the Canker of Envy.

From SION-CHAPPEL at
Hampstead, Middlesex,
Novemb. 15. 1715.

F I N I S.

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